

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

Eastern District of California

FILED

May 01, 2024

CLERK, U.S. DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

SEALED

United States of America

v.

ANTHONY COATES.

Case No.

2:24-mj-0054 JDP

Defendant

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of March 8, 2024 & April 4, 2024 in the county of Sacramento in the  
Eastern District of California, the defendant(s) violated:

*Code Section*

COUNT 1 –

*Offense Description*

Distribution of at least 50 grams of a mixture and substance containing a detectable amount of methamphetamine, in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1) (March 8, 2024).

COUNT 2 –

Distribution of at least 500 grams of a mixture and substance containing a detectable amount of methamphetamine, in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1) (April 4, 2024).

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See Affidavit of USPIS Postal Inspector Linsey Betts, attached hereto and incorporated by reference.

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.

/s/ Linsey Betts

Complainant's signature

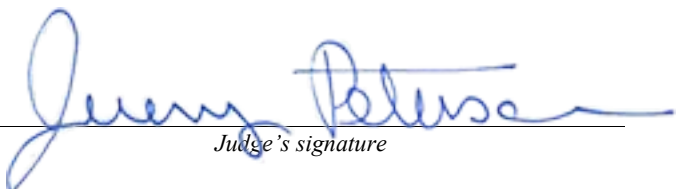
Linsey Betts, U.S. Postal Inspector

Printed name and title

Sworn to me and signed telephonically.

Date: May 1, 2024

City and state: Sacramento, California



Judge's signature

Jeremy D. Peterson, U.S. Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

**AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF CRIMINAL COMPLAINT AND ARREST WARRANT FOR  
ANTHONY COATES**

I, Linsey Betts, Postal Inspector with the United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS), being first duly sworn, hereby depose and state as follows:

**I. PURPOSE**

1. This Affidavit is submitted in support of an arrest warrant and criminal complaint charging Anthony COATES with distribution of at least 50 grams of a mixture and substance containing a detectable amount of methamphetamine, in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1), occurring on or about March 8, 2024 (Count One); and distribution of at least 500 grams of a mixture and substance containing a detectable amount of methamphetamine, in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1), occurring on or about April 4, 2024 (Count Two).

**II. AGENT BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE**

2. I am a Postal Inspector with the United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) currently assigned to the Sacramento, California field office. I investigate criminal violations of federal and state law, including illegal narcotics, firearms, and illicit proceeds being sent through the U.S. Mail; money laundering; robbery and burglary of postal employees and facilities; theft/possession of stolen U.S. Mail; mail and bank fraud; and identity theft crimes. I am a “federal law enforcement officer” within the meaning of Rule 41(a)(2)(C) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure; that is, a federal law enforcement agent engaged in enforcing criminal laws and authorized to request a search warrant.

3. I have been a full time sworn Postal Inspector with the USPIS since December 2021. In 2021, I completed sixteen weeks of Postal Inspector Basic Training in Potomac, Maryland. This training involved the investigation of mail theft, drug and firearms trafficking, burglaries, robberies, money laundering, theft/possession of stolen United States Mail, mail and bank fraud, and identity theft crimes. I have received specialized training in narcotics investigation matters including, but not limited to, drug interdiction, drug detection and identification, money laundering techniques/schemes, communications analysis, and cryptocurrency/dark web investigations.

4. Through my training, experience, and interaction with other experienced Postal Inspectors, Task Force Officers, and other investigators, I have become familiar with the methods

1 employed by drug traffickers to smuggle, safeguard, store, transport, and distribute drugs; to collect and  
2 conceal drug-related proceeds; and to communicate with other participants to accomplish such  
3 objectives. I have participated in and led investigations targeting individuals trafficking contraband via  
4 the U.S. Mail. I have participated in cases involving federal narcotics and firearms violations, including  
5 unlawful sales, possession, manufacturing, and distribution of narcotics and/or firearms. I have  
6 participated in a variety of different investigative aspects while conducting investigations with USPIS,  
7 including surveillance, undercover operations to conduct controlled purchases of contraband,  
8 interviewing suspects, and the execution of search and arrest warrants. I have written search, seizure,  
9 and arrest warrants related to drug and firearms trafficking investigations, drug proceeds investigations,  
10 and parcel interdiction.

11 5. The facts set forth in this affidavit are based upon my personal observations, my training  
12 and experience, and information obtained from other law enforcement personnel and witnesses,  
13 including my review of reports prepared by other law enforcement officers and agents. This affidavit is  
14 intended to show merely that there is sufficient probable cause for the requested warrants and does not  
15 purport to set forth all my knowledge of the investigation into this matter. Unless specifically indicated  
16 otherwise, all conversations and statements described in this affidavit are related in substance and in part  
17 only.

### 18 **III. SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATION**

19 6. As discussed in further detail below, Anthony COATES, a convicted felon, distributes  
20 large quantities of methamphetamine and counterfeit pills containing methamphetamine in the greater  
21 Sacramento, California area and across the United States utilizing the U.S. Mail.

22 7. Agents have seized approximately six pounds of methamphetamine from parcels shipped  
23 by COATES and identified at least 17 parcels of suspected narcotics mailed by COATES since August  
24 2023 to multiple States, including New York and Florida. Shipping records indicate COATES and/or his  
25 co-conspirators have shipped dozens of parcels to other states as well. Agents have also conducted  
26 controlled purchase operations with COATES during which an undercover agent purchased counterfeit  
27 pills and methamphetamine.  
28

IV. STATEMENT OF PROBABLE CAUSE

A. On multiple occasions, law enforcement seized parcels of drugs and/or drug proceeds shipped between COATES and/or his co-conspirators and a suspect in New York.

8. In September 2023, USPIS seized a parcel containing approximately ten pounds of methamphetamine, which was mailed from a post office in the Sacramento area to an address in Ithaca, NY. A review of USPS telecommunications records showed numerous online customer tracking inquiries conducted for the seized parcel. During my review I observed additional, related, online customer tracking inquiries conducted for other parcels shipped from California to two addresses in New York (in West Hempstead and Westbury), and for parcels shipped from New York to an address on Dunlay Drive in Sacramento. Based on my training, experience, and the contents of the seized parcel, the back-and-forth parcel shipments between New York and California appeared to be consistent with the trafficking of narcotics and narcotics proceeds.<sup>1</sup>

9. In October 2023, while reviewing USPS business records, I observed five parcels were mailed from the Sacramento area to the two addresses in New York I had previously identified. All five of the parcels bore the return address of “Trevor Cyprus 7729 Agate Beach Way Antelope, CA 95843.” Each box weighed approximately eight pounds and bore “e-Bay” branded packing tape. I obtained surveillance video from the mailing facility which showed a male adult subject carrying the parcels inside, paying for the postage with cash, and using a cell phone during the transaction. This subject was later identified as Anthony COATES.<sup>2</sup>

10. I spoke with Postal Inspectors in New York who were aware of an ongoing law enforcement investigation regarding the suspected recipient of the parcels from California (hereafter referred to as the “New York suspect”). Law enforcement found that the New York suspect was directly

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<sup>1</sup> Specifically, I know from my training and experience that individuals trafficking narcotics via the U.S. Mail will often ship to or from several different addresses in the same geographical area in an effort to evade law enforcement detection. Furthermore, these individuals will often use fictitious names on the parcels that do not associate with the addresses they ship to and from. I noted that the parcels observed shared many of these same characteristics. I therefore believe that these shipments were consistent with the shipment of narcotics.

<sup>2</sup> As described in paragraph 11, in November 2023 I seized a parcel associated with this investigation which was addressed to “Anthony Coate.” I conducted a search of this name in law enforcement databases and on social media websites. I compared the photos I found to the individual in the video surveillance and observed that they resembled each other.

1 associated with the identified address in West Hempstead, and the address in Westbury belonged to one  
2 of the suspect's associates. A review of USPS business records showed the New York suspect regularly  
3 mailed parcels at USPS facilities, some of which were destined to addresses in California. Parcels mailed  
4 by the New York suspect often bore return address stickers bearing the same name and address in  
5 Nanuet, NY. The name on the return address sticker did not associate with the address.

6 11. On November 3, 2023, I conducted a review of USPS business records and identified a  
7 suspicious parcel mailed from New York to Sacramento. I detained the parcel, which bore the same  
8 return sticker as previous parcels mailed by the New York suspect and was addressed to "Anthony  
9 Coate" at the Dunlay Drive address.

10 12. On November 7, 2023, federal search warrant 2:23-SW-1137 CKD was authorized and  
11 executed on the parcel. The parcel contained \$32,200 in US currency concealed inside multiple layers of  
12 plastic and heat-sealed packaging.

13 13. A review of USPS tracking records showed that telephone number (279) 465-1074 called  
14 the USPS hotline twice to inquire about the parcel.

15 14. On November 15, 2023, I spoke with COATES's assigned probation officer, who stated  
16 he regularly contacted COATES about probation matters at telephone number (279) 465-1074, which  
17 COATES provided to the officer as his personal cell phone number.

18 **B. Law enforcement obtained federal search warrants authorizing the capture of GPS**  
19 **location data for two phones belonging to COATES.**

20 15. On November 27, 2023, federal search warrant 2:23-SW-1190 was signed by United  
21 States Magistrate Judge Allison Claire in the Eastern District of California, authorizing the collection of  
22 precise location data from COATES's cellular telephone number 279-465-1074.

23 16. Law enforcement has maintained continuous GPS location data search warrants for  
24 telephone number 279-465-1074 from November 27, 2023 to present.

25 17. On February 23, 2024, federal search warrant 2:24-SW-0195 was signed by United States  
26 Magistrate Judge Jeremy D. Peterson in the Eastern District of California, authorizing the collection of  
27 precise GPS location data from telephone number (916) 500-8106, the COATES CELL PHONE.

28 18. Law enforcement has maintained continuous GPS location data search warrants for

1 telephone number (916) 500-8106 from February 23, 2024 to present.

2 **C. Law enforcement seized a parcel containing six pounds of methamphetamine that**  
3 **COATES mailed to New York.**

4 19. A review of GPS location data for telephone number 279-465-1074 indicated that  
5 COATES traveled to the Los Angeles area on the evening of December 8, 2023, then returned to the  
6 Sacramento area the following night, December 9, 2023.

7 20. A review of USPS business records indicated that on December 9, 2023, eleven parcels  
8 were mailed from the Los Angeles area to the two previously identified addresses in New York. Five of  
9 the parcels were mailed to the New York suspect at the West Hempstead address, and six were mailed to  
10 the associated Westbury address.

11 21. A review of surveillance video collected by law enforcement at two different mailing  
12 facilities in Lakewood and Burbank, California showed Anthony COATES mailing the eleven parcels  
13 on December 9, 2023. COATES mailed five parcels from the Lakewood facility and six parcels from the  
14 Burbank facility. The video shows COATES waiting at the counter with the parcels, paying cash for the  
15 postage, and using a cell phone during the transaction. A review of GPS location data showed that  
16 COATES's cell phone (279-465-1074) was located near both mailing facilities at the time USPS  
17 business records show the parcels were mailed.

18 22. On December 13, 2023, Postal Inspectors in the Eastern District of New York intercepted  
19 one of the parcels mailed to the Westbury address. On December 14, 2023, federal search warrant 23-  
20 MJ-1107 (SIL) was executed on the parcel, which contained over six pounds of a white crystalline  
21 substance which field-tested positive for methamphetamine.

22 **D. On four separate occasions in 2024, an undercover DEA agent purchased drugs**  
23 **from COATES.**

24 23. In December 2023, I learned of an ongoing investigation being conducted by Special  
25 Agents from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). The case agents believed COATES was a  
26 narcotics supplier for several individuals suspected of narcotics trafficking. DEA case agents arranged  
27 for a confidential informant, who was an associate of COATES, to introduce an undercover (UC) DEA  
28 agent to COATES as a customer. The UC communicated with COATES via the cell phone number  
(916) 500-8106 (the COATES CELL PHONE), and later via the cell phone application "Signal" to

1 organize the purchase of narcotics. These “controlled purchases” were surveilled and monitored by law  
2 enforcement agents from DEA, USFIS, and members of the High-Intensity Drug-Trafficking Area Task  
3 Force (HIDTA).

4 24. On January 11, 2024, law enforcement conducted a controlled purchase with COATES in  
5 Sacramento, California, in the Eastern District of California. COATES was located before the operation  
6 using the GPS location data from his cell phone, and was recognized by law enforcement agents on the  
7 surveillance team who had previously seen photos of COATES, including his DMV photo. According to  
8 DEA Special Agents, in the days leading up to the operation, the confidential informant<sup>3</sup> who introduced  
9 COATES to the UC confirmed that COATES was selling narcotics. COATES told the confidential  
10 informant that COATES had “5 boats of wheels” and “RP10s” available for sale.<sup>4</sup> During the operation,  
11 COATES identified himself as “Anthony [REDACTED]” to the UC and sold approximately 439 grams of  
12 counterfeit Adderall pills to the UC for \$1,500. Law enforcement then followed him to an apartment  
13 located on Deep Pond Lane in Sacramento, and observed him park his vehicle near the garage and enter  
14 the apartment. The GPS location data showed that COATES’s cell phone (279) 465-1074 did not appear  
15 to move during the operation, but was located in the vicinity of the apartment for the duration.

16 25. On February 14, 2024, a review of USPS records indicated a parcel was mailed to an  
17 address in Palm Beach, Florida from a mailing facility in Sacramento. I detained the parcel and collected  
18 surveillance video from the facility, which showed an individual who I recognized as COATES mailing  
19 the parcel and paying for the postage in cash. On February 16, I executed federal search warrant 2:24-  
20 SW-0179 on the parcel, which contained 27 grams of counterfeit Xanax pills.

21 26. On February 15, 2024, law enforcement conducted a second controlled purchase with  
22 COATES in Sacramento in the Eastern District of California. COATES was located at the Deep Pond  
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24 <sup>3</sup> CS has been active since 2021 and has been working for consideration on a prior violation  
25 where he/she was convicted in 2011 of marijuana manufacture, conspiracy to possess with intent to  
26 distribute marijuana and served 60 months in prison and 60 months on probation. CS has no offenses  
27 related to dishonesty or credibility. CS has cooperated and assisted the DEA in controlled purchases that  
28 led into state arrests. Agents have been able to independently corroborate some of the information  
provided by CS related to the suspected drug trafficking activities by COATES as further detailed  
below. For these reasons, I believe CS to be reliable.

<sup>4</sup> Based on law enforcement training and experience, a “boat” refers to 1,000 pills, “wheels”  
refers to fentanyl, and “RP10s” refers to OxyContin pills.



1 Lane address before the operation using the GPS location data from cell phone (279) 465-1074. During  
2 the operation, the UC recognized COATES as the same individual who had provided the Adderall on  
3 January 11, 2024, and the surveillance team also recognized him from the previous controlled purchase  
4 and from photos, including his DMV photo. COATES sold approximately 462 grams of counterfeit  
5 Adderall pills<sup>5</sup> and 302 grams of counterfeit Xanax pills to the UC for \$2,350. During the purchase,  
6 COATES stated that he mainly deals in “powder,” and “crystal,” that he uses and sells Adderall, and that  
7 he does not like “blues” because you can get a lot of time if you get caught with them.<sup>6</sup> Law  
8 enforcement then followed COATES back to the Deep Pond Lane address and observed him park his  
9 vehicle, check his mail at the community mailbox, and enter the apartment. The GPS location data for  
10 COATES’s cell phone (279) 465-1074 was consistently in his vicinity as law enforcement surveilled  
11 him before, during, and after the operation.

12 27. On March 8, 2024, law enforcement conducted a third controlled purchase with COATES  
13 in Sacramento in the Eastern District of California. According to DEA Special Agents, prior to the  
14 operation, the UC sent COATES a message offering \$1,000 for one pound of methamphetamine and  
15 asking to meet up to conduct the transaction. COATES responded that he would meet the UC after 2:00  
16 PM. COATES was located at the Deep Pond Lane address before the operation using the GPS location  
17 data from both cell phones (including the COATES CELL PHONE, 916-500-8106). Law enforcement  
18 recognized COATES from the previous controlled purchases and photographs. Law enforcement  
19 followed COATES as he picked up a rental car and then stopped at the Dunlay Drive address. Law  
20 enforcement did not see which apartment COATES entered, but saw him leaving the complex carrying a  
21 bag. He then traveled to the appointed location for the controlled purchase, where he sold approximately  
22 512.4 grams of methamphetamine<sup>7</sup> to the UC for \$1,000. Law enforcement then followed COATES  
23 back to the Deep Pond Lane address. The GPS location data showed that the COATES CELL PHONE

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24 <sup>5</sup> The counterfeit Adderall pills were later submitted to a DEA laboratory for analysis and  
25 determined to contain methamphetamine and to weigh approximately 427.1 grams net weight.

26 <sup>6</sup> Based on law enforcement training and experience, “powder” refers to cocaine, “crystal” (and  
27 “clear”) refers to methamphetamine, and “blues” refers to counterfeit oxycodone/fentanyl pills.

28 <sup>7</sup> Law enforcement later submitted the methamphetamine to a DEA laboratory for analysis which  
determined a net weight of approximately 455.7 grams and to contain 451.1 grams +/- 30 grams of pure  
methamphetamine.



1 was consistently in COATES's vicinity as law enforcement surveilled him.

2 28. On April 4, 2024, law enforcement conducted a fourth controlled purchase with  
3 COATES in Sacramento in the Eastern District of California. COATES was located at the Deep Pond  
4 Lane address before the operation using the GPS location data from both cell phones. Law enforcement  
5 recognized COATES from previous controlled purchases and from photographs. Also, before the  
6 operation, COATES communicated with the UC by sending photos and a video of a shipment of  
7 (psilocybin) mushrooms and asking if the UC knew anyone that would be interested. COATES also told  
8 the UC he could definitely get "clear" and could try to get the "blues" which would cost \$1,500. Law  
9 enforcement observed COATES travel to a Taco Bell and meet with another individual, who arrived in a  
10 separate vehicle, entered the passenger side of COATES's vehicle, remained for about ten minutes, then  
11 exited and drove away. Law enforcement then followed COATES to the meeting location, where he sold  
12 approximately 1360 grams of methamphetamine<sup>8</sup> to the UC for \$3,000. COATES told the UC he was  
13 unable to get the "blues" but would advise when he got some. Shortly thereafter, law enforcement saw  
14 COATES park near the Dunlay Drive address and enter apartment 313 carrying a backpack. The GPS  
15 location data showed that both cell phones were consistently in COATES's vicinity as law enforcement  
16 surveilled him.

17 **V. REQUEST FOR COMPLAINT AND WARRANT**

18 29. Based on the facts above, there is probable cause to believe that on two separate  
19 occasions, Anthony COATES distributed methamphetamine, a schedule II controlled substance, in  
20 violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1). Accordingly, I respectfully request the Court issue a Criminal  
21 Complaint and Arrest Warrant.

22 **VI. REQUEST TO SEAL**

23 30. I further request that the Court seal this Complaint, Affidavit, and associated papers. The  
24 investigation is not yet known to COATES and his associates, and disclosure would seriously impede  
25 the investigation and/or provide COATES and other targets with an opportunity to destroy evidence or  
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27 <sup>8</sup> Law enforcement later submitted the methamphetamine to a DEA laboratory for analysis which  
28 determined a net weight of approximately 1,332.7 grams and to contain 1,319.3 grams +/- 87.3 grams of  
pure methamphetamine.

flee from prosecution. Accordingly, there is good cause to seal these documents because their premature disclosure may seriously jeopardize the investigation. Sealing these documents will help ensure the safety of agents and others.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Linsey Betts

Linsey Betts  
Postal Inspector  
U.S. Postal Inspection Service

Subscribed and sworn to telephonically  
before me on:

May 1, 2024



Hon. Jeremy D. Peterson  
U.S. MAGISTRATE JUDGE

/s/ Haddy Abouzeid

Approved as to form by AUSA HADDY ABOUZEID

**United States v. Anthony Coates**  
**Penalties for Criminal Complaint**

**COUNT 1:**

VIOLATION: 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1) – Distribution of at least 50 Grams of a Mixture and Substance Containing a Detectable Amount of Methamphetamine

PENALTIES: Mandatory minimum of 5 years in prison and up to 40 years in prison; or  
Fine of up to \$5,000,000; or both fine and imprisonment  
Supervised release of at least 4 years and up to life

SPECIAL ASSESSMENT: \$100 (mandatory)

**COUNT 2:**

VIOLATION: 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1) – Distribution of at least 500 Grams of a Mixture and Substance Containing a Detectable Amount of Methamphetamine

PENALTIES: Mandatory minimum of 10 years in prison and up to life in prison;  
or  
Fine of up to \$10,000,000; or both fine and imprisonment  
Supervised release of at least 5 years and up to life

SPECIAL ASSESSMENT: \$100 (mandatory)